

FIRST SET OF INFORMATION REQUESTS OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY
TO ALL PARTICIPANTS

D.T.E. 04-116

Respondent: Amy Smith, KeySpan Energy Delivery New England

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- Q. Regarding standardization of service quality benchmarks, please identify those service quality measures that could be standardized on a state-wide basis.
- A. As noted by the Company in its initial and reply comments. (See KeySpan's initial comments at 21-24 and KeySpan's reply comments at 14-17), the only SQ measure that lends itself to standardization is Odor Call Response. The Company's position is supported by the December 19, 2002 report of Navigant Consulting, Inc. titled Summary of Findings Related to Service Quality Benchmarking Efforts. That report concluded that inherent differences among utilities in terms of data-collection methods, data quality, geography, distribution system design and configuration and weather impacts make it virtually impossible to establish standardized performance benchmarks that would have validity in terms of measuring the performance of a specific Massachusetts based-utility. Moreover, standardized benchmarks would be contrary to the Department's stated objective for SQ performance benchmarks, which is to ensure that there is no degradation in the service quality provided by a utility. Only by measuring performance against historical benchmarks can a Company, and the Department, readily assess whether or not service quality is being maintained at the levels customers have come to expect.